

THE OTHER CLEFTS IN NORTHERN SOMALI (NS)

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What are clefts? (I)

- A family of constructions that highlight a focal constituent. Widespread in contemporary European languages, in modern Arabic and Hebrew, in several Ethiosemitic and Cushitic languages from the Horn of Africa, etc.
- Major typological works on clefts are:
 - LAMBRECHT, K. 2001. A framework for the analysis of cleft constructions. *Linguistics* 39/3: 463-516.
 - ROGGIA, C. E. 2009. *Le frasi scisse in italiano. Struttura informativa e funzioni discorsive*. Geneva, Slatkine.

What are clefts? (II)

Two prototypical Italian and French clefts:

a. *E' lui* [*che mi ha visto*]

C'est lui [*qui m'a vu*]

b. *E' lui* [*che ho visto ∅*]

C'est lui [*que j'ai vu ∅*]

Structure:

(Dummy Subj)	COP	CONSTITUENT	S _{SUBORD}
		(Focus)	(Presupposed)

What are clefts? (III)

A partial syntactic paradigm:

- a. *E' lui [che mi ha visto]_S* FocConst = Subj
- b. *E' lui [che ho visto Ø]_S* FocConst = DObj
-
- n. *E' a piedi [che ci devi andare]_S* FocConst = AdvPP
-
- t. *E' quando sta al buio [che ha paura]_S* FocConst = S

NB: in (a.) and (b.) the presupposed S_{SUBORD} is a relative-like clause in many languages.

In (n.) and (t.) it is NOT.

What are clefts? (IV)

Roggia (2009) lists 23 different types of clefts for Italian, e.g.:

a.) Clefts

Type 1: *E' la nebbia [che mi fa paura].*

Type 4: *E' stato il presidente [ad aprire i lavori].*

b.) Inverted Clefts

Type 7: *[Ad aprire i lavori] è stato il presidente.*

c.) Pseudo-Clefts

Type 8(a): *[Chi ha aperto i lavori] è stato il presidente.*

d.) Inverted Pseudo-Clefts

Type 10: *E' in casa [dove lavoro meglio].*

What are clefts? (V)

e.) Pseudo-conditional Clefts

Type 12(b): [*Se siamo salvī*] è grazie a lui.

g.) Presentational Clefts

Type 15: *C'è il gatto* [*che ha fame*].

NB under some readings S_{subord} is not presupposed in this type

h.) Mixed Type Clefts

Type 18(b): [*A fare la guardia*] c'è il cane.

i.) *Wh*-Interrogative Clefts

Type 20(b): *A chi è* [*che hai dato le chiavi?*].

Type 22: *Chi è stato* [*a lasciare la porta aperta?*].

Type 23: *Chi c'è* [*che ha fame?*].

What are clefts? (VI)

Notice that Roggia's list is not even exhaustive for Italian. Furthermore, types like French Presentational clefts with *voici* have not been listed by him:

Voici quarante ans [que le ministère a autorisé la pilule contraceptive].

A quite different type discussed by Lambrecht and Roggia are the so-called “Inferential Clefts”:

Fr. *C'est [que maintenant j'emploie Pepsodent].*

It. *Non è [che non lo volessi salutare], è [che non l'ho visto].*

(Dummy Subj)	COP	CLAUSAL CONSTITUENT
		(Focus)

The NS so-called “*waxa(a)*-clefts” (I)

NS has a well-known and widely used construction with *waxa* [wáña] (in the NW, elsewhere *waxaa* [wáñâ:] < *waxa* ‘the thing’ + (*b*)*aa* ‘FOCUS’), that makes it possible to place a focussed NP or clausal constituent after the main verb:

Kiishkii aniga ayaa kuu soo raadinaya

‘The bag, I will find it for you’

(Subj Focus on *aniga* ‘I’ with *ayaa*)

Kiishkii waxa kuu soo raadinaya aniga

‘id.’

(Subj Focus on *aniga* with *waxa*)

The NS so-called “*waxa(a)*-clefts” (II)

Some authors, at least since Moreno, regard the *waxa*-construction as being a cleft, either underlyingly or historically, i.e., as a “reduction” of a pseudo-cleft:

Kiishkii [waxa kuu soo raadinayaa] waa aniga

‘The bag, who will find it for you is me’

Both the transformational analysis and the grammaticalizational one require:

- a) deletion of *waa*,
- b) deletion of the Nominative case marking on *raadinayaa*,
- c) insertion of *(b)aa* in the *waxaa*-type, and
- d) change from a 2-clausal to 1-clausal structure.

The NS so-called “*waxa(a)*-clefts” (III)

At “surface level”, the *waxa*-constructions are monoclausal: they are more adequately described as a kind of extraposition, that places a focussed NP, or a heavy constituent like a subordinate clause or a complex NP after the main verb (cf. Behagel’s law):

Kiishkii waxa kuu soo raadinaya [aniga]



Waxa uu kaa doonayaa [in aad u sheegtid]



‘He wants from you that you tell him’

The NS so-called “*waxa(a)*-clefts” (IV)

That NS *waxa*-constructions have been grammaticalized from pseudo-clefts is a possibility, if one works through **internal reconstruction exclusively based upon NW Somali**.

Comparative considerations, however, show that the picture is more complex.

For instance, a pseudo-cleft hypothesis does not account for the occurrence of (*b*)*aa* ‘FOCUS’ in eastern and southern NS, and in Benaadir Somali, that all have *waxaa* [wáħâ:] < *waxa* + *baa*, not *waxa* [wáħa] as in the NW.

The NS so-called “*waxa(a)*-clefts” (V)

In addition to this, several southern Somali dialects are different:

a.) Maay (e.g., von Tiling’s):

*Ariiki **may** yarhee* “*Sa galeeye?*”

‘The boy said “May I come in?”’

b.) Tosco’s Tunni:

*An **may** agareey islaantii Umur qobə*

‘I saw the woman whom Omar has (as his wife)’

In both cases, *may* = *may* ‘what?’, and the main verb has a lengthened form: Maay –ee, Tunni - eey.

The NS clefts (I)

Real cleft-like constructions in NS have been only marginally discussed in the literature.

Method: The following texts have been surveyed:

Y = Yaasiin. 1976. *Qaamuuska af-soomaaliga*. **[NS]**

XS = Muuse Galaal & Andrzejewski. 1956. *Xikmad Soomaali*. **[NW NS]**

AT = Afrax. 2007. *Tala-seeg*. **[NS]**

WG = Interview with H.E. President Geelle “Ummad aan afkeeda ilaashan” *Halabuur* [2007]. **[Dj NS]**

B = Aadan Beleloo. 2009. *Murtiyaynta xeer-dhaqameedka Soomaalida*. *Halabuur*. **[Dj NS]**

PE = a small corpus of personal emails **[NS, Dj NS]**

The NS clefts (II)

Two major sub-families have been observed in the corpus:

1. Pseudo-clefts of different types, and
2. Several types of clefts with no presupposed subordinate, i.e., structurally more similar to the so-called “inferential clefts”.

The NS clefts (III)

1.a. Pseudo-clefts with final focus:

i.) Some examples:

Malaha [waxaan la gariirayaa] waa

[weydnimada]_{NP} iyo [cimriga is guraya]_{NP}

‘Maybe the reason I am trembling is emaciation and advancing age’ [AT: 95]

[Waxa keliya oo la og yahay] waa [inay – sida kuwa afafka hodanka ah – aad u badan yihiin]_S

‘The only known thing is that – as in the rich languages – they are really many’ [Y: xi]

The NS clefts (IV)

*Labada qodob ee hore, weliba [**ka** ereyga gacanta lugu **raadinayo** mar walba], **waa** [**ka** wakhti lumiska iyo indhaxanuunka leh]*

‘Still, of the two previous issues, the fact that one word has to be looked for manually each time is what causes loss of time and pain in the eyes’
[PEDj: 20150422]

ii.) Presentational pseudo-clefts:

*[Wixii maanta lay siiyay] **waa kuwan** e wada qaado!*

‘Here is what I was given today, take it all!’ [XS: 61]

The NS clefts (V)

1.b. Pseudo-clefts with initial focus:

i.) An example:

Shakila'aan waa [iyagii]_{NP} [waxa caawana na soo weeraray]

'Doubtlessly it was them who attacked us also this evening' [AT: 95]

ii.) *Kolka*-pseudo-clefts:

(In the entry on *qorraxmadoobaad* 'solar eclipse')

[Kolka dayaxu dibbado ...] weeye [kolka uu sigo ama sabab u noqdo qorraxmadoobaadka]

'It is when the moon is dark that it covers it (i.e., the sun) or causes the solar eclipse' [Y: 250]

The NS clefts (VI)

iii.) Yes/No-interrogative pseudo-clefts:

Ma cod dumar baa [waxa albaabka ka qaylinayaa] mise anaa moodey!

‘Is it a woman’s voice that is shouting at the door, or is it just a feeling?’ [AT: 95]

iv.) *Wh*-interrogative pseudo-clefts:

Tolow waa tuma [tan i garanaysee magacayga ku barooranaysaa]?

‘Hey, who is this woman that knows me and shouts my name?’ [AT: 95]

v.) Presentational pseudo-clefts:

Waa taa [tan keentay walwelka aad sheegtay].

‘Just this is what caused the concern you mentioned’ (*voilà ce que ...*) [WG: 16]

The NS clefts (VII)

2. Clefts with no presupposed subordinate:

2.a. *Waa ta* and *waa tii* clefts:

i.) A few examples:

Waa [taan in badan kaaga sheekeeyey]

‘Indeed, I talked to you about it many times’

(*taan* = *tii* or *ta* + *aan*) [AT: 98]

Waa [tii xabbadi igu dhacdaa] [inaanan run sheegin]

‘May a bullet hit me if I have not told the truth’

[XS: 108]

The NS clefts (VIII)

ii.) Negative questions:

*Suldaan, **sow** [**tii** faalkii iga guuray] **ma aha?***

‘And Sultan, didn’t the *faal*’s power leave me?’

[XS: 56]

*‘Hooyo, **sow** [**taad** waligaaba iga odhan jirtey
[*beenta Ilaah baa kugu cadaabayee been ha
sheegin*]]? Sideed imminka ii leedahay waxaas
oo been ah sheeg?*

‘Mother, didn’t you always use to tell me: “God
will punish you for telling lies: don’t tell any lie!”?’

How can you tell me now that I should tell all
these lies?’ (**notice no copula nor waa here!**)

[AT: 100]

The NS clefts (IX)

2.b. *Waa* [Q] clefts:

*Waxaan ahayn qoys dhisan oo nolol wanaagsan ku nool. [Aniga iyo odaygayguba shaqo wanaagsan ayaan haysaney] **bay ahayd***

‘We were a solid family, which lived a good life. Indeed, both I and my husband had good jobs’ [AT: 98]

(Notice that *aniga ... haysaney* is a quote, because formally it is a main clause, even though it occurs in the position of a subordinate clause)

The NS clefts (X)

The occurrence of cleft-like constructions varies considerably according to the register:

- a. B, a scholarly essay, has none;
- b. AT, a short story with highly emotional dialogues, and WG, an interview, have plenty of them;
- c. XS has several of them, in the dialogues, not in the strictly narrative sections;
- d. Y, uses some types, especially in the *Gogoldhig* (“Introduction”) and in the appendixes; also PE make use of some types.

At the present state, no particular frequency in Djiboutian written Somali.

Mahadsanidin!

Thank you!

Merci!